

### REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

This Amendment is in response to the Office Action of June 24, 2008. Claims 1 and 3-16 are pending in the present application. Claims 1, 3-4, and 17 have been rejected. Claim 1 has been amended to further define the scope and novelty of the present invention, in view of the Examiner's comments, in order to place the claims in condition for allowance. New claims 18, 19, and 20 have been added. Support for the amendments to the claim 1 is found on page 5, lines 19-20, and on page 4, lines 8-11. Support for new claim 18 is found on page 4, lines 8-11. Support for new claim 19 is found on page 4, lines 15-21. Support for new claim 20 is found on page 5, line 21. Applicants respectfully submit that no new matter has been presented. Accordingly, claims 1, 3-4, and 17-20 are pending. For the reasons set forth more fully below, Applicants respectfully submit that the claims as presented are allowable. Consequently, reconsideration, allowance, and passage to issue are respectfully requested.

Applicants would like to thank the Examiner for the phone interview of July 30, 2008. We appreciate the courtesy and helpfulness of the Examiner in the interview. The claims have been amended in light of the points made by the Examiner in the interview.

### Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102

#### Examiner Stated:

**Claims 1, 3, 4, and 17 and 3-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Lada et al. [US 7,269,746 B1] ...**

Applicants respectfully traverse the Examiner's rejections. The present invention provides a method for automatically determining a configuration of an I/O connector panel coupled to a system. In accordance with one embodiment of the present invention,

the method includes providing information about the capabilities of the I/O connector panel to a memory within the I/O connector panel, prior to connecting one or more peripherals to the I/O connector panel, wherein the I/O connector panel provides different combinations of connectors, wherein each connector provides a connection point between I/O devices and the system. The method further includes examining the information in the memory. The method further includes downloading from a network at least one driver that works with at least one I/O device capable of being supported by the I/O connector panel. The method further includes downloading the at least one driver to the system coupled to the I/O connector panel based upon the examined information. Lada does not disclose these features as claimed, as discussed below.

Lada discloses a Personal Digital Assistant (PDA) or handheld device comprising a main unit and an option pack, wherein the option pack stores all of the application software and drivers. Upon insertion, the hardware interface invokes a device manager on the main unit that interrogates a memory device on the option pack. The interrogation includes data on drivers, applications, configuration and miscellaneous requirements of the option pack. This identification process allows the option pack to store information, drivers and applications on the option pack, so the main unit does not have to use its memory to store information on a large number of option packs. Once the option pack and its applications are identified, the device manager on the main unit retrieves the applications and drivers from a separate memory device on the option pack and downloads the applications and drivers onto the main unit. Upon de-installation of the option pack from the main unit, the applications and drivers are removed from the main unit. (Abstract.)

However, Lada also does not disclose providing information about the capabilities of the I/O connector panel to a memory within the I/O connector panel, “wherein the I/O connector panel provides different combinations of connectors, wherein each connector provides a connection point between I/O devices and the system,” as recited in amended independent claim 1. The Examiner has referred to column 14, lines 52-55, and column 16, lines 7-10 of Lada as disclosing the information providing step. However, column 14, lines 52-55, of Lada as discloses an option pack that connects to a main unit. In contrast to Lada, I/O connector panel of the present invention provides “different combinations of connectors, wherein each connector provides a connection point between I/O devices and the system.” Lada shows two CF/PCMCIA slot sockets in Figure 3. However, these are the same connectors. In other words, Lada does not disclose different combinations of connectors. Therefore, amended claim 1 is allowable over Lada for at least this reason.

Furthermore, Lada does not disclose “downloading from a network at least one driver that works with at least one I/O device capable of being supported by the I/O connector panel,” as recited in amended independent claim 1. Nowhere does Lada mention downloading drivers from a network.

Therefore, Lada does not disclose the combination of steps as recited in amended independent claim 1, and this claim thus allowable over Lada.

#### Dependent claims

Dependent claims 3-4 and 17-20 depend from amended independent claim 1. Accordingly, the above-articulated arguments related to amended independent claim 1

apply with equal force to claims 3-4 and 17-20, which are thus allowable over the cited reference for at least the same reasons as claim 1.

New claims 18-20

New claim 18 recites “wherein the at least one driver downloaded from a network comprises a family of drivers, wherein the family of drivers are downloaded at the same time.” Lada does not disclose these features. As indicated above, nowhere does Lada mention downloading drivers from a network. Also, nowhere does Lada mention or suggest downloading a family of drivers from a network. Therefore, claim 18 is allowable over Lada for at least this reason.

New claim 19 recites the combination of “maintaining a table that indicates whether particular drivers have been downloaded for a given I/O connector panel” and “utilizing the table to determine if any downloads are necessary.” Nowhere does Lada does not disclose this combination of features. Therefore, claim 19 is allowable over Lada for at least this reason.

New claim 20 recites “wherein the different combinations of connectors comprise one or more of a Universal Serial Bus (USB) connector, RS232 connector, and an RS485 connector.” As noted above, Lada shows two CF/PCMCIA slot sockets in Figure 3. Because these are the same connectors, Lada does not disclose different combinations of connectors. Furthermore, CF/PCMCIA slot sockets are different from USB connectors, RS232 connectors, and RS485 connectors. Therefore, claim 20 is allowable over Lada for at least this reason.

CONCLUSION

Applicants' attorney believes this application is in condition for allowance.  
Should any unresolved issues remain, Examiner is invited to call Applicants' attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

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